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New York

President: Mr. Insanally ..... (Guyana)

The meeting was called to order at 11.20 a.m.

Mudslides in Colombia

The President: Before turning to the items on our agenda for this morning, may I, on behalf of all the members of the Assembly, extend our deepest sympathy to the Government and the people of Colombia on the tragic loss of life and extensive material damage that have resulted from the mudslides following the earthquake that recently struck Colombia.

May I also express the hope that the international community will show its solidarity, and respond promptly and generously to any request for help.

I now call on the representative of Colombia.

Mr. Rey (Colombia) *(interpretation from Spanish):* On behalf of the Government of Colombia, I wish to express our sincere gratitude to you, Mr. President, for your words of condolence and solidarity on the recent painful tragedy in my country. Colombia deeply appreciates the kind words of the international community, and of the United Nations in particular, on these tragic events.

On 6 June 1994, a strong earthquake in the south-western area of Colombia caused serious mud slides. An enormous mass of mud and vegetation slid into numerous rivers, forming gigantic dikes, which later succumbed to the force of the pent-up waters. Dozens of tremendous avalanches swept away towns and villages.

It is difficult to assess the true dimensions of the destruction - of actual number of avalanches and mud slides, the number of towns affected and the number of people killed and injured. The event took place in a remote area 40 miles wide, not readily accessible to census-takers. Indeed, at the time of the tragedy we had no exact population figures, nor any definite information on the type of housing involved or on what services might be locally available.

The causes of the tragedy were not just natural. The advance of deforestation had weakened what used to be solid mountains in the region. Some experts say that had it not been for the deforestation, the mountainsides would not have washed away so quickly; there might have been no avalanches and no dikes. In short, there would not have been a tragedy of this magnitude.

The deforestation, in turn, was caused largely by social ills. The affected area is an impoverished one. For centuries the indigenous population of the Paéz Valley had been living in 16 reservations. In recent years, settlers and natives had cleared land and built shacks on the banks of rivers - the most vulnerable places in the event of an avalanche. This was not just an act of nature: The disaster was compounded by poverty.

The magnitude of the tragedy is revealed by the following eye-witness account by a native inhabitant:

"The river engulfed us. The mountains were hurling rocks down upon us. The earth was

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shaking; then it opened up to swallow us all. Everyone was swept away by the current, even my children.

"Look at the town. There is nothing left: neither the church nor the school; the main street is gone. Shall I tell you what happened to my wife? She was swallowed up by the earth as well. She disappeared!"

This sad experience in Colombia shows how very important it is to have mechanisms of cooperation for the prevention of natural disasters. In the United Nations, this is a subject that should be given increased attention. By an unhappy coincidence, the tragedy in Colombia took place just a few days after the World Conference on the Reduction of Natural Disasters in Yokohama, Japan. Colombia had participated actively in that Conference.

In Colombia, as in other countries, the characteristics of land occupation, the poverty of large segments of the population and the pressures on resources have all made people more vulnerable to natural disasters. It is not just a question of disaster relief: We need prevention. We need cooperation and an exchange of experience in that respect.

While my delegation expresses particular thanks for the assistance given by various countries and agencies, we do want to appeal to the international community to mobilize additional resources to make it possible at least to mitigate the current situation.

This immense task must be supported - a task that covers some 10,000 square kilometres and a population of some 50,000 persons in the area most seriously affected. Over 12,000 people have been accommodated in camps to provide them with basic services, either flown in or trucked in. A great deal of work is necessary to reconstruct the villages and promote their economic and social rehabilitation. In more general terms, support for Colombia can also be decisive in establishing medium- and long-term programmes to prevent or mitigate the results of natural disasters.

I wish to express once more, Mr. President, our appreciation for your statement of support for Colombia in this time of tragedy, and for your kind remarks in this connection at this special meeting of the General Assembly.

Agenda item 8 *(continued)*

Adoption of the agenda and organization of work

Request for the reopening of the consideration of agenda item 96 (International Conference on Population and Development)

Note by the Secretary-General (A/48/952)

The President: The Assembly will now consider a note by the Secretary-General, contained in document A/48/952.

In his note, the Secretary-General informs the General Assembly that

> "... the Economic and Social Council, in its resolution 1993/76 of 30 July 1993, recommended that the Preparatory Committee for the International Conference on Population and Development become a subsidiary body of the General Assembly, and decided that the report of the Preparatory Committee on its second session should be submitted to the Assembly at its forty-eighth session, to be considered under agenda item 96 entitled, 'International Conference on Population and Development'". *(para. 1)*

The General Assembly, in its decision 48/448 of 21 December 1993, took note of the note by the Secretary-General on the report of the Preparatory Committee (A/48/492). The Preparatory Committee held its third session at Headquarters from 4 to 22 April 1994. At that session it approved the provisional rules of procedure of the Conference.

In order for the General Assembly to approve the provisional rules of procedure before the opening of the Conference, which is to be held at Cairo from 5 to 13 September 1994, it will be necessary to reopen consideration of agenda item 96, entitled "International Conference on Population and Development".

May I take it that the General Assembly wishes to reopen consideration of agenda item 96, entitled "International Conference on Population and Development"?

It was so decided.

The President: Representatives are aware that this agenda item was allocated to the Second Committee. However, in order for the Assembly to proceed expeditiously on this matter, may I take it that the Assembly wishes to consider the rules of procedure of the Conference directly in plenary meeting?

It was so decided.

The President: I should like to inform members that agenda item 96 will be considered at a later date, to be announced in the Journal.

Human rights questions, including alternative approaches for improving the effective enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms [114 (b)]

The President: Members will recall that this item was closed at the 89th meeting, held on 14 February 1994. The item, which was closed inadvertently, should have been retained in the agenda in the light of paragraph 4 of the report of the Third Committee, circulated as document A/48/632/Addendum 4.

Paragraph 4 contains a proposal that states that the open-ended working group of the Third Committee should, upon completion of the issue of the election of a High Commissioner for Human Rights, consider other aspects of the implementation of the recommendations of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, as set out in paragraphs 17 and 18 of Part II of the said Declaration.

May I take it, therefore, that the Assembly agrees that sub-item (b) of agenda item 114, entitled "Human rights questions, including alternative approaches for improving the effective enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms" is retained in the agenda of the forty-eighth session?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 133 *(continued)*

Financing of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara: report of the Fifth Committee (Part III) (A/48/816/Add.2)

The President: I request the Rapporteur of the Fifth Committee, Mr. Mahbub Kabir of Bangladesh, to introduce the report of the Fifth Committee, which is contained in document A/48/816/Add.2.

Mr. Kabir (Bangladesh), Rapporteur of the Fifth Committee: I have the honour today to present to the General Assembly the report of the Fifth Committee concerning agenda item 133, entitled "Financing of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara". Part III of the report of the Fifth Committee is contained in document A/48/816/Add.2.

In paragraph 6 of the report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of draft resolution A/C.5/48/L.69, which was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

The President: If there is no proposal under rule 66 of the rules of procedure, I shall take it that the General Assembly decides not to discuss the report of the Fifth Committee which is before it today.

It was so decided.

The President: Statements will therefore be limited to explanations of vote or position.

The positions of delegations regarding the recommendations of the Fifth Committee have been made in the Committee and are reflected in the relevant official records. May I remind members that under paragraph 7 of decision 34/401 the Assembly agreed that

> "When the same draft resolution is considered in a Main Committee and in plenary meeting, a delegation should, as far as possible, explain its vote only once, i.e., either in the Committee or in plenary meeting unless that delegation's vote in plenary meeting is different from its vote in the Committee."

May I also remind delegations that, also in accordance with General Assembly decision 34/401, explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Before we begin to take action on the recommendations contained in the report of the Committee, I should like to advise representatives that we are going to proceed to take a decision in the same manner as was done in the Committee.

The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of part III of its report.

The draft resolution was adopted by the Fifth Committee without a vote.

May I consider that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 48/250 B).

The President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 133.

Agenda item 3 *(continued)*

Credentials of representatives to the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly

(b) Third report of the Credentials Committee (A/48/512/Add.2)

The President: Members will recall that the Assembly considered the first and second reports of the Credentials Committee at its 43rd and 86th meetings on 29 October and 21 December 1993 and adopted resolutions 48/13 A and B.

The draft resolution recommended by the Credentials Committee in paragraph 9 of its third report reads as follows:

"The General Assembly,

"Having considered the third report of the Credentials Committee and the recommendation contained therein,

"Approves the third report of the Credentials Committee."

The Assembly will now take action on the draft resolution recommended by the Credentials Committee in paragraph 9 of its third report (A/48/512/Add.2).

The Credentials Committee adopted this draft resolution without a vote.

May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 48/13 C).

The President: I am very pleased to invite the delegation of South Africa to proceed to occupy its proper place in the General Assembly Hall.

The delegation of South Africa took its place in the General Assembly Hall.

The President: I extend a very warm welcome to the delegation of South Africa, as it resumes its seat in the General Assembly.

May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (b) of agenda item 3?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 38 *(continued)*

Elimination of apartheid and establishment of a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa:

(a) Report of the Special Committee against Apartheid (A/48/22/Add.l)

(b) Report of the Secretary-General (A/48/523/Add.l)

(c) Draft resolutions (A/48/L.58; A/48/L.59

The President: Members will recall that the Assembly concluded its debate on this agenda item at its 80th plenary meeting, on 15 December 1993, and that at its 85th plenary meeting, on 20 December 1993, the Assembly adopted four resolutions that had been submitted under this agenda item.

At its 88th meeting, on 21 January 1994, the Assembly considered another report of the Secretary-General and adopted a fifth resolution on this item.

The Assembly now has before it the addendum to the report of the Special Committee against Apartheid, distributed as document A/48/22/Add.l and the addendum to the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Trust Fund for South Africa, contained in document A/48/523/Add.1.

In this connection the Assembly has before it two draft resolutions contained in documents A/48/L.58 and A/48/L.59.

Before calling on the first speaker, I should like to propose that the list of speakers on this item be closed today at 12 noon.

If I hear no objection, it will be so decided.

It was so decided.

The President: I therefore request those representatives wishing to inscribe their names on the list of speakers to do so as soon as possible.

I now call on the Chairman of the Special Committee against Apartheid, Mr. Ibrahim Gambari of Nigeria, to make a statement in the course of which he will introduce draft resolution A/48/L.58.

Mr. Gambari (Nigeria), Chairman of the United Nations Special Committee against Apartheid: South Africa is free at last. And it is therefore with great joy and immense pride that, on behalf of the Special Committee against Apartheid, I warmly welcome free South Africa to a place of honour in this family of nations - the General Assembly.

Two years ago, when I was re-elected for the second time as Chairman of the Special Committee against Apartheid, and a month after the convening of the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA I), I expressed the fervent hope to be the very last Chairman of this Committee. I was confident that despite its flaws, CODESA had, for the first time in the history of apartheid South Africa, brought together former foes at the negotiating table and thereby raised hopes that a peaceful settlement of the conflict in South Africa was not only possible, but also imminent.

Today, my wish to be the last Chairman of our Committee has, happily, been fulfilled. The world has witnessed not only the end of apartheid, but also the active transfer of power to a non-racial and democratic Government of National Unity, and therefore the Special Committee against Apartheid, established some 31 years, has completed its mandate. Apartheid is dead, and in its place we now have a democratic political system that guarantees equality, peace and justice for all its people, irrespective of their colour, their race, their creed, their religion and their sex.

The United Nations, and in particular the Special Committee against Apartheid, should take deserved pride in the honourable role it has played over the years in mobilizing international support for the elimination of apartheid and in promoting support for the peace process that recently resulted in the establishment of a democratic and non-racial society in South Africa. It should be pointed out, however, that the road to South Africa's democracy has been a long and arduous one. There were times when the situation looked so bleak and so hopeless that some among us never thought we would live to see the day when apartheid would be declared dead and buried. None the less, the various setbacks experienced during the course of the international campaign against apartheid never stopped or deterred the Special Committee against Apartheid from making its relentless efforts towards the elimination of apartheid and the establishment of a non-racial and democratic South Africa.

The events of the past two years have proved that the South African people and their leaders, in a remarkable display of tolerance, wisdom and foresight, were able to see the peace process to its successful conclusion. As the Assembly is aware, from 26 to 29 April 1994 the first universal suffrage elections were held in South Africa and were judged to have been free and fair. On 10 May 1994 Mr. Nelson Mandela was inaugurated as the State President of the new Republic of South Africa, and a Government of National Unity was established shortly thereafter.

A new era has thus been ushered in South Africa, and what a glorious era it promises to be - not only for the people of South Africa but also for the southern African region, the African continent and the world as a whole!

During our last and most recent mission to South Africa, the delegation of the Special Committee was immensely impressed with the spirit of cooperation and reconciliation prevailing in the country. In our meeting with President Mandela, he told us that there now existed a great deal of goodwill among the political parties of South Africa and among its peoples. The elections, and in particular the establishment of the Government of National Unity, he said, had brought about a new spirit of cooperation. The Special Committee shares President Mandela's optimism, and he certainly has our best wishes for the future of a new South Africa.

With democracy finally achieved in South Africa, however, the biggest challenge facing the new Government is to address the enormous socio-economic imbalance resulting from decades of apartheid. It is the hope and recommendation of the Special Committee against Apartheid that the international community will continue to render the necessary financial and economic assistance to the new South Africa, so that it can consolidate the foundations of the new, non-racial constitutional order and launch the country on a path of sustained growth and development. Our Committee believes that South Africa, reconciled with itself, has the makings of an economic powerhouse. Members of the Special Committee against Apartheid will continue to be true friends of South Africa in the General Assembly and other international forums.

I should now like to thank the Member States of our Organization for their moral and material support for the South African cause and for the immense contributions they have made individually and collectively to the peaceful elimination of apartheid. I am proud to acknowledge the special role of my own country, Nigeria, in steadfast support for the international efforts towards the eradication of apartheid. We also want to thank successive Secretaries-General for their perseverance and their dedication in implementing faithfully the various mandates contained in relevant Security Council and General Assembly resolutions over the years, in particular those relating more recently to the establishment and operations of the United Nations Observer Mission in South Africa and its contribution to the implementation of the National Peace Accord and to the electoral process.

Our gratitude goes also to the entire staff of the Centre against Apartheid, who have worked tirelessly over the years, often under difficult circumstances and at times well beyond the call of duty. I want, on behalf of our Committee, to thank Mr. Johan Nordenfelt, as well as all former Directors of the Centre against Apartheid, in particular Mr. Sotirios Mousouris, for their support and cooperation throughout the existence of the Special Committee against Apartheid. I would also like to thank all my predecessors who served faithfully as Chairmen of the Special Committee.

Finally, and above all, the Committee wishes to pay special tribute to the people of South Africa for their courage, resilience and steadfastness. There is no doubt that the political events that have unfolded in South Africa are primarily their victory. It is our hope and conviction that the statesmanship demonstrated in the negotiations, throughout the elections and in the establishment of the Government of National Unity will continue as South Africa consolidates its non-racial and multiparty democracy. The international community has been a contributor to this happy outcome, but it is also a beneficiary of the unique process which brought about a new, non-racial democracy in South Africa. Many countries, including many of those represented in this General Assembly, that are presently torn by racial, ethnic and other forms of conflict which may appear intractable would do well to draw the lessons from the successful efforts of the South African people and their leaders to transcend their differences through peaceful negotiations and forge a common future. The victory against racism and racial oppression in South Africa is another great lesson for the international community as a whole.

At this stage, I would like to introduce, with great pride and satisfaction, the draft resolution (A/48/L.58) sponsored by my delegation. I wish in particular to draw the attention of the General Assembly to operative paragraphs 2, 4, 8 and 11, which express our joy over, and appreciation of, not only the peaceful manner in which the South African conflict has been resolved, but also the spirit of consensus that has prevailed during the past four years in our united and determined effort to bring apartheid to an end. I am also particularly gratified by our continued commitment to fostering stability in South Africa through increased assistance to the Government and people of South Africa, as called for in operative paragraph 11.

Furthermore, as specifically regards operative paragraph 11, it is understood that the proposed appointment which we recommend that the Secretary-General consider making of a coordinator for United Nations development activities in South Africa would fully comply with the relevant General Assembly resolutions, among them resolutions 47/199 and 48/209, which will be taken as a framework on this matter to ensure full consistency with the spirit and institutional arrangements of the United Nations development system.

As we adopt the draft resolution before us, and as we welcome the representatives of the new South Africa to the community of nations, as represented in the General Assembly, we are thereby closing an important chapter in the history of our Organization where our joint efforts have been crowned with success. The struggle against apartheid has become a mission accomplished. Therefore, we sincerely hope that this draft resolution will be, as the General Assembly has done in recent

years, adopted by consensus, since this is the last time we shall be considering a resolution on this agenda item, the elimination of apartheid and establishment of a united, democratic, and non-racial South Africa.

Finally, let us use our common resolve, let us use the lessons learned from the South African experiment, to attempt to turn confrontations into negotiations, to turn hatred into goodwill and to turn swords into ploughshares in an increasingly uncertain and conflictual world.

The President: On behalf of the Assembly, I should like to pay tribute to the Chairman of the Special Committee against Apartheid.

I now call on the Rapporteur of the Special Committee against Apartheid to introduce the Special Committee's report.

Mr. Goel (India), Rapporteur of the Special Committee against Apartheid: I have the honour to introduce on behalf of the Special Committee against Apartheid its report (A/48/22/Add.1) to the General Assembly.

This is the final report of the Special Committee to be presented to the United Nations. After tireless and persistent work to support the anti-apartheid struggle in South Africa and to strengthen the process of establishing a non-racial, democratic and united South Africa, as manifest in many resolutions piloted by the Special Committee against Apartheid, in particular General Assembly resolution S-16/1, the mission is coming to an end. Through the adoption of the Interim Constitution and the constitutional principles, the conduct of the first democratic and non-racial elections, and the establishment of the Government of National Unity in South Africa, apartheid has finally come to an end. Resolution 48/159 B, adopted by the General Assembly on 20 December 1993, determined that the Special Committee would submit its final report to the Assembly upon completion of its mandate following the establishment of a democratically elected non-racial Government in South Africa. With the submission of this final report and the adoption of the draft resolution in document A/48/L.58, the mandate of the Special Committee will have come to an end. This is indeed a historic occasion in the annals of the United Nations.

As clearly stated in the report, the Special Committee during the period under review and under the chairmanship of Mr. Ibrahim Gambari, followed every step in the process and gave its full support to the democratization process. The Special Committee also highlighted the importance of providing generous assistance to South Africa to overcome the legacy of apartheid.

Having successfully completed its mandate, the Special Committee in this final report has adopted a forward-looking approach, examining the various problems which face the new Government of South Africa and the ways in which the international community, as represented by the United Nations, other multilateral organizations and countries at a bilateral level, could assist the new South Africa in the Herculean tasks it now faces in addressing the critical issues of socio-economic development and economic growth. The most important task, obviously, is to address the existing socio-economic inequalities in the country.

The report comprises five sections, in addition to the introduction.

Section II contains a review of political developments in South Africa, including the transitional structures, the electoral process and an examination of the question of violence. The Special Committee acknowledges the fact that, as a result of the elections and the establishment of the Government of National Unity, there has been a dramatic decrease in violence. In fact, the elections were conducted without a single election-related death or attack on any polling station.

With a view to underlining the importance of addressing the socio-economic issues in South Africa, the third section of the report is devoted to the questions of education, housing, unemployment, health, land and electrification. We are encouraged by the priority given to these issues by the Government of National Unity in South Africa. This section also analyses the role which the international community could play in supporting the South African Government in these areas.

Section IV deals with the international response to development in South Africa. The Special Committee has expressed its appreciation and support for the actions taken by the Secretary-General, his Special Representative and the United Nations Observer Mission in South Africa, as well as the Organization of African Unity, the Commonwealth and the European Union. The Committee has also expressed appreciation for the help provided by the many non-governmental organizations during and before the electoral process in South Africa.

We are also grateful to the Non-Aligned Movement for its leading role in the struggle against apartheid.

I would like to draw the attention of the Assembly to the activities of the Special Committee during the period under review. The Chairman of the Special Committee issued a number of statements emphasizing the importance of holding the elections in an atmosphere free of violence and intimidation, and encouraging all political parties to be engaged in the electoral process. The Special Committee sponsored the Seminar on Sustainable Economic Growth and Development in South Africa: Policy Priorities for the Early Years of a Democratic Government. The Seminar was held in London from 22 to 24 January 1994. It also co-sponsored the International Briefing on South Africa's First Democratic and Non-racial Elections, held in Brussels from 28 February to 1 March 1994.

I would like to highlight the importance of the two missions conducted by the Special Committee to South Africa. The first, from 28 February to 5 March 1994, was aimed particularly at encouraging all the political parties to participate in the electoral process. The second, from 6 to 10 June 1994, was a fact-finding mission also intended to assist in determining the needs of South Africa in the post-apartheid era.

The conclusions and recommendations of the report affirm the fact that, with the entry into force of South Africa's first non-racial and democratic Constitution and the holding of South Africa's first non-racial elections, the system of apartheid has been eliminated in South Africa. As has been highlighted in the report, the Committee sincerely hopes that the international community will focus its attention now on generously assisting South Africa in the post-apartheid era.

In conclusion, I would like to convey my thanks to the members of the Committee for their support and the active contribution they made in preparing this report. I would also like to convey my gratitude to the Director and staff of the Centre against Apartheid, without whose dedicated efforts and support of the Drafting Group this report would not have been possible.

The President: I now call on the Chairman of the Committee of Trustees of the United Nations Trust Fund for South Africa to introduce draft resolution A/48/L.59.

Mr. Osvald (Sweden), Chairman of the Committee of Trustees of the United Nations Trust Fund for South Africa: It is a great honour for me to introduce draft resolution A/48/L.59 on behalf of the sponsors. Let me add that Antigua and Barbuda, Botswana and Japan have expressed the wish to be included in the list of sponsors.

The Trust Fund for South Africa was established as early as 15 December 1965. For almost three decades it has thus served as a means for the United Nations to support victims of apartheid by providing humanitarian, legal and relief assistance to persons persecuted for their opposition to apartheid and to those who were forced into exile.

The Trust Fund has thus been concrete evidence of the support of the United Nations and its Members for the struggle against apartheid, not only in words, but also in deeds. All in all, more than $50 million have been contributed by Member States to the Fund.

In adopting the draft resolution before it, the General Assembly would express its satisfaction at the successful holding of South Africa's first non-racial and democratic elections, the establishment of a Government of National Unity and the coming into effect of a non-racial and democratic constitution.

Considering that the struggle against apartheid, to use the words of the Chairman of the Special Committee against Apartheid, is now "a mission accomplished", the General Assembly would agree with the Committee of Trustees of the Trust Fund that the Fund has now fulfilled its mandate and would endorse its recommendation that its functions be discontinued. The Assembly would also endorse the recommendation that the remaining funds, approximately $640,000, be transferred to the United Nations Educational and Training Programme for South Africa to be used for the valuable purposes of that Programme.

The Assembly would furthermore express its appreciation to the Governments, organizations and individuals that have made generous contributions to the Trust Fund, and to the voluntary agencies which have rendered legal, educational and relief assistance to the victims of apartheid throughout the years. It would also express its gratitude to the Secretary-General and the Committee of Trustees for their humanitarian efforts in South Africa.

Finally, the General Assembly would appeal to Member States to offer financial and material support to the reconstruction and development efforts of the new

South African Government and to continue to assist civic society in South Africa.

With these words of introduction, I trust that the draft resolution, like earlier draft resolutions on the Fund, will be adopted without a vote.

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolutions A/48/L.58 and A/48/L.59.

We turn first to draft resolution A/48/L.58, entitled "Work of the Special Committee against Apartheid".

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/48/L.58?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 48/258 A).

The President: With regard to paragraph 11 of the draft resolution, it is understood that the proposed appointment of a coordinator for United Nations development activities in South Africa will fully comply with the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly, *inter alia*, resolutions 47/199 and 48/209, which will be taken as the framework for implementation of this matter in order to ensure full consistency with the spirit and institutional arrangements of the United Nations development system.

We now turn to draft resolution A/48/L.59, entitled "United Nations Trust Fund for South Africa".

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/48/L.59?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 48/258 B).

The President: In the light of the resolutions just adopted, the agenda item on the elimination of apartheid and establishment of a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa is therefore deleted from the agenda of the General Assembly.

I am now very pleased to call on the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, to make a statement.

The Secretary-General: The people of South Africa have found their voice. A new South Africa now takes its place among the family of nations. Today South Africa regains its place as a full partner in the work of the United Nations.

The fight against apartheid was the most important struggle of our century. The destruction of apartheid is a tribute to the people of South Africa. It is a testament to the commitment of the international community. It was a struggle that extended far beyond South Africa's borders. It was a struggle that helped to shape the United Nations and to shape the international community as a whole.

South Africa's success, therefore, is also a success for the United Nations. Through the United Nations, the international community expressed its solidarity with the people of South Africa. Through the United Nations, the international community showed its support for their cause and for their struggle.

The contribution of the United Nations was substantial. Its role was significant. By forcefully condemning apartheid, the United Nations reinforced the moral dimension of the struggle. By isolating South Africa, and by assisting the opponents of apartheid, the United Nations expanded the political dimensions of the struggle. By urging and imposing sanctions, the international community added a vital economic dimension to the struggle.

In moral and human terms, the voice of the international community was clearly heard. The General Assembly declared apartheid to be a violation of the Charter. It held apartheid to be a violation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It labelled apartheid as a crime against the conscience and dignity of all humanity. It monitored and publicized brutality. It worked to mobilize public opinion against injustice.

Politically, the United Nations helped to build and cement an international consensus in support of change. A Special Committee against Apartheid was established in 1962 with the aim of promoting opposition to apartheid. In 1974 the General Assembly barred South Africa from participating in its work, and invited liberation movements to participate as observers. A Trust Fund was established to aid political prisoners and their families. International Anti-Apartheid Year was proclaimed for 1978. Special international days were designated in solidarity with opponents of apartheid. The political message against apartheid was clear.

The United Nations was also instrumental in strengthening the economic dimension of the struggle against apartheid. The Security Council imposed a mandatory arms embargo on South Africa under Chapter VII of the Charter. The General Assembly declared 1982 International Year of Mobilization for Sanctions against South Africa. These actions gave new momentum to anti-apartheid efforts in many Member States.

I am especially proud that the United Nations was also central to international efforts to promote the establishment of a democratic and non-racial South Africa.

The adoption in 1989 of the Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa was a turning-point. Its adoption cemented a new consensus on South Africa. This consensus was a significant element in creating the conditions for a negotiated solution.

United Nations representatives were made available during the long negotiations. United Nations observers were sent in August 1992 to build confidence and help diminish the spread of political violence. At the request of the Transitional Executive Council, 1,600 United Nations election monitors were sent to observe South Africa's first free and democratic elections in April this year. The successful installation of a Government of national unity is a fitting reward for South Africa, for the United Nations and for the international community as a whole.

(spoke in French)

This spring, at a time when the African continent was too often the sad scene of ethnic confrontation, civil war and border conflicts exacerbating the poverty and underdevelopment that beset much of its population, South Africa provided unforgettable images of faith in the future.

At the recent summit meeting of the Organization of African Unity in Tunis I had the opportunity to say that the first universal-suffrage elections in South Africa and Nelson Mandela's assumption of the presidency of a democratic, non-racial South Africa marked a historic moment. These images of national reconciliation unquestionably reflect a memorable event that will go down in the annals of history. And they can serve as an example to us all.

Welcoming South Africa to the General Assembly and to the various bodies and agencies of the United Nations system is undoubtedly a source of pride for us. For the United Nations, it is also a source of legitimate satisfaction, since for decades the world Organization has spared no effort to help the people of South Africa to struggle against apartheid and to regain its dignity.

Today, we in turn ask South Africa to support us in our struggle for peace and development in Africa. Yes, a democratic, non-racial South Africa can help the African continent in its quest for stability, tolerance and democracy.

The remarkable way in which South Africans rose above their differences and laid the foundations for a multi-party, non-racial democracy is exemplary. The courage, tenacity and historic vision needed to overcome the extraordinary difficulties and ensure a peaceful transition must be a source of hope for the entire African continent.

As a regional economic Power, South Africa can also contribute to the development of the African continent. Moreover, it can be a factor for stability in the region.

South Africa has a major role to play within the General Assembly. Not only Africa, but the entire international community, expects a great deal of it.

It is therefore with equal measures of joy and hope, and indeed with deep emotion, that today I welcome South Africa to the General Assembly.

The President: As President of the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session, I am very pleased to welcome the delegation of the new, democratic and non-racial South Africa to this resumed session of the General Assembly. This is a day for which the international community has long waited. We rejoice that the struggle against the iniquitous system of apartheid has finally been won and that South Africa, a founding Member, can now resume its place at the United Nations.

Surely, the successful outcome of the anti-apartheid campaign must be considered a tribute to the United Nations role in promoting the cause of peace and justice everywhere. At a time when the Organization is frequently criticized for failure to adequately address the world's many problems, let us not forget that it was the moral voice of this Assembly that called incessantly for the freedom of the oppressed people of South Africa.

For the last three decades, this body has been actively concerned with the situation in South Africa. During these years, the Assembly served as a catalyst for international action to persuade the South African minority regime to abandon its policies of apartheid. As the Secretary-General has just said, at its sixteenth special session, held in 1989, the Assembly set the framework for the peaceful transformation of South Africa into a united, democratic and non-racial society, adopting by consensus the historic Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa.

The subsequent release of Mr. Nelson Mandela and other political prisoners, as well as the enactment of other measures conducive to free political dialogue, launched the negotiating process on the right track. In spite of considerable obstacles, important accords were reached. Among these were the adoption of universal adult suffrage, the interim Constitution, the constitutional principles which were attached to the interim Constitution, the establishment of the Transitional Executive Council and other bodies, particularly the Independent Electoral Commission, and the holding of the first universal-suffrage elections in South Africa from 26 to 29 April 1994. The people of South Africa who been had denied the franchise for so long demonstrated great enthusiasm in casting their votes. On 5 May South Africa's new Parliament convened and on 10 May the new State President and Government of National Unity were installed, ushering a new era in the country's history.

The United Nations Observer Mission in South Africa (UNOMSA) not only helped in observing the elections, but also played an expanded role within the framework of the National Peace Accord. Furthermore, UNOMSA, in keeping with its mandate, undertook the task of coordinating the activities of the observer missions of the Organization of African Unity, the Commonwealth and the European Union. Its contribution to the process of transition must be warmly commended.

In this regard, I would also like to praise the stellar role of the Special Committee against Apartheid and of its distinguished Chairman, Ambassador Gambari of Nigeria. It kept vigil with the South African people during their darkest hours, and in the final days it encouraged non-governmental organizations engaged in voter education and election monitoring. It held and sponsored seminars and conferences in support of political tolerance and a non-racial multi-party democracy in South Africa. It focused the attention of the international community on the need to assist the Government and the people of South Africa in addressing the huge socio-economic disparities resulting from decades of apartheid.

Under new leadership, South Africa today stands ready to face the future. No one who had the privilege of attending the inauguration of Mr. Mandela as State President could fail to be impressed by the joyous zeal with which the South African people greeted their new life. The Government of National Unity in South Africa is now confronting with great determination the major reconstruction and development programmes that will be required to satisfy their aspirations. The spirit of national harmony and reconciliation that prevails in the country augurs well for rapid progress.

At this critical time, the Government and the people of South Africa are deserving of the continuing support of the United Nations and its Member States in their campaign to establish a just and prosperous society. I sincerely hope that assistance, whether on a bilateral or multilateral basis, will be forthcoming in the months and years ahead to help overcome the legacy of apartheid. On behalf of the Assembly, I should like to indicate to the delegation of South Africa our readiness to cooperate closely with them. Inspired by the miracle which has occurred in South Africa, we in the Assembly can work together to achieve other wonders for humanity.

I am now pleased to call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of South Africa, Mr. Alfred Nzo, to make a statement.

Mr. Nzo (South Africa): Mr. President, Mr. Secretary-General, members of the Assembly, I bring you warm greetings from President Nelson Mandela and the Government and all the people of South Africa.

Today is a special occasion for South Africa, as we resume our seat in this august Assembly after an absence of 20 years. It is indeed a pleasure to do so under the presidency of Ambassador Insanally. We are deeply moved by the warmth of our reception here today, and grateful for the generous welcome which has greeted our long-awaited return.

South Africa's long night of diplomatic isolation has finally come to an end. In the past month we have joined the Organization of African Unity and, the Non-Aligned Movement, and we have rejoined the Commonwealth. Today we are back in the United Nations General Assembly. We are mindful of our new international

responsibilities, and we look forward to contributing as best we can to the international community's efforts to make our world a better, safer and more prosperous place.

The United Nations has a long and distinguished record of involvement in the search for freedom and democracy in South Africa. As we celebrate our country's return to the community of nations, we recall with gratitude that, a year after the founding of this Organization, the question of South Africa and the treatment of its people was placed on the agenda of the General Assembly. Now, a year before the fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations, the question of the elimination of apartheid has finally been removed from the agenda. The United Nations, as represented by this Assembly, can take pride in its commitment and perseverance in the pursuit of freedom, justice and human rights. We believe South Africa can now serve as an example and an inspiration to the world that the United Nations will not surrender the principles for which it stands.

Indeed, in its consideration of the South African question, various precedents have been created in the United Nations which have helped to focus attention on matters of global importance, particularly in the field of human rights. While the people of South Africa have benefited enormously by the attention given to these matters, the new South African Government will energetically support and encourage all efforts to advance human rights throughout the world, with special emphasis on eliminating the scourge of racial discrimination.

The struggle against apartheid was long, arduous and painful. The support of the international community, and the United Nations in particular, was a critical factor in our final victory over that system. It gives us great pleasure to be able to share our victory with you today. Your constant involvement and assistance throughout those long years is something the people of South Africa will never forget.

Members of the Assembly will recall the fundamental changes which occurred within South Africa, and elsewhere in the world, during the course of 1989. For the first time in decades, there appeared a real possibility that South Africa could come to peace with itself through a process of peaceful negotiations. This situation led to the Declaration of the Ad Hoc Committee of the Organization of African Unity on Southern Africa on the question of South Africa, adopted in Harare on 21 August 1989 - a heroic development which became known as the Harare Declaration, and which was subsequently endorsed by the Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries at their Ninth Conference, held in Belgrade from 4 to 7 September 1989.

On 14 December 1989, the United Nations General Assembly took up the issue at its sixteenth special session and adopted the Declaration of Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa. This was of seminal importance, as the fundamental principles upon which the new South Africa would be based were set forth in the Declaration, as were such vital matters as the Climate for Negotiations, and the Guidelines to the Process of Negotiations.

I personally had the privilege of addressing the Assembly during its consideration of the issue, in my capacity as leader of the delegation of the African National Congress. On that day, among other things, I said:

> "In many people throughout the world there is today a great deal of hope that South Africa is on the eve of a fundamental transformation ... of our country into a non-racial democracy." *(A/S-16/PV.3, p. 116)*

Now, nearly five years later, it gives me great pleasure to confirm to this Assembly that that noble objective has finally been achieved. The conditions set forth in the Declaration have been met. South Africa is free.

As South Africa is welcomed back into your midst, and as we resume our work in the General Assembly, we pledge to make the principles and objectives of the United Nations Charter our own. Furthermore, President Mandela has made it clear, and demonstrated by the commitment made at Tunis, as well as in regard to South Africa's return to the Commonwealth, that the democratic Government of National Unity will, as a matter of principle meet its financial obligations associated with membership of international organizations.

Uppermost in our minds, however, are the responsibilities which our new Government of National Unity has towards the people of South Africa. Our primary goal is to strive to create a better life for all of our people. To this end we have announced an ambitious Reconstruction and Development Programme in an earnest attempt to address the needs and expectations of millions of our people. We have to demonstrate that democracy will bring tangible benefits to our disadvantaged communities. In this respect, we simply

have to succeed; we have to show that democracy works. We believe our whole region, and Africa in general, will also benefit by our efforts; but we will also have to accept that the cost to South Africa will be enormous.

The Reconstruction and Development Programme will be the centre-piece of the Government's policies over the next five years - probably longer. This year R2.5 billion has been allocated to a special fund in order to begin financing much needed projects, and in each of the following years amounts of R5 billion, R7.5 billion, R10 billion, and R12 billion are expected to be allocated as the Programme gains momentum. Such a massive diversion of resources is critical if the Programme is to succeed, and we have every intention of making a success of it. It does mean, however, that South Africa will have extremely limited resources for anything which falls outside of this Programme, as Government spending has been significantly cut to meet these new demands. The result, we believe, will bring greater stability, peace, and prosperity to our country, our region and, ultimately, our continent. Democracy will be seen to have tangible economic as well as political benefits, and our new-found freedom will make of South Africa the kind of country we have all been working for.

Having said that, allow me to repeat that South Africa is ready to support the United Nations in all its efforts to promote global peace and prosperity. In particular, we are looking forward to expanding relations with the various agencies in the United Nations family, not only because of their valuable role in the future development in South Africa but also because of the opportunity for South Africa to contribute to international upliftment programmes.

With regard to Rwanda, South Africa is acutely aware of the suffering of innocent civilians there. I am happy to report that yesterday I informed the Secretary-General of the United Nations that South Africa has available a number of armoured personnel carriers for possible use by the United Nations peace-keeping operation in Rwanda mandated by Security Council resolutions 918 (1994) and 925 (1994), assuming that they will meet the United Nations operational requirements and that mutually satisfactory terms for their use will be negotiated. Discussions with the Secretariat on practical and logistical issues in this regard are under way. In addition, South Africa will join the international community in its humanitarian assistance effort. We recently sent a technical team to Kenya and Tanzania to conduct a needs assessment in consultation with the relevant United Nations agencies. In collaboration with the private sector the South African Government will provide high-energy foodstuffs, water purification tablets, pharmaceuticals and blankets. As we have been advised, our assistance will focus on traumatized children and pregnant women.

As I indicated to the recent meeting of the OAU Council of Ministers in Tunis, South Africa stands ready to cooperate with its neighbours in establishing regional confidence-building mechanisms, such as an Africa Nuclear-Free Zone, and promoting a common security framework in the sub-continent in order to secure lasting peace.

In addition, we are committed to a policy of non-proliferation and arms control which covers all weapons of mass destruction as well as conventional weapons. To implement this policy South Africa is in the process of taking numerous substantive steps. We are a State Party to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological Weapons Convention, and we have played an active role in the negotiations of the United Nations Group of Experts, which was established in consultation with the OAU, for the drafting of such a Treaty.

The people of South Africa salute the Special Committee against Apartheid as well as the Centre Against Apartheid and all other United Nations institutions for their consistent efforts and dedication for over three decades. The reward for the United Nations and the international community is the birth of a democratic and free South Africa - and all our people were deeply honoured when so many of you came to Pretoria on 10 May to participate in our joyous inauguration, which also bestowed pride and dignity on all our people. Ambassador Gambari, as in previous years has once again deployed his astute diplomatic skill and guided this Assembly to consensus on the resolution that has just been adopted. We wish to thank the United Nations, Ambassador Gambari and millions of ordinary people from all walks of life who kept their promise and walked the last mile, hand in hand, with all the people of South Africa.

Today also witnesses the termination of the United Nations Trust Fund for South Africa. Since 1965 the Trust Fund has contributed uniquely to the elimination of apartheid by rendering legal, educational and humanitarian relief assistance to the victims of apartheid. On behalf of the recipients of this assistance, we extend our deep gratitude for the generosity of the donor countries that supported the Fund over all these years.

We welcome the decision of the Committee of Trustees to transfer the balance of the Trust Fund to the United Nations Educational and Training Programme for Southern Africa. As the Assembly is aware, education is an integral element of my Government's Reconstruction and Development Programme. We trust that generous support for the United Nations Educational and Training Programme for Southern Africa will continue.

Mr. President, allow me also to say how grateful we are that you have generously authorized the transfer to South Africa of the Art against Apartheid Collection. An important and poignant piece of our history will thus be going home, where it belongs. The Collection has toured the world as an effective and dignified protest against apartheid, and I know our people will welcome the prospect of caring for it in the future so that we may teach our children and the generations to come about the chapter of our history that we are bringing to a close today.

South Africa and its people are also indebted to the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, who extended his goodwill offices to our leadership at the most crucial phase of our transition. Under his leadership, you, the Members of our Organization, stood by us at the most trying period of persistent violence hindering the negotiating process. In the end, you were there, represented by the United Nations observers, when millions of South Africans patiently stood in line to vote for the first time in their lives. The tireless efforts of the Special Representative for South Africa, Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi, supported in such an able manner by Ms. Angela King, must be recognized and South Africa's appreciation appropriately recorded. We also extend our deepest gratitude to the observers dispatched by the Organization of African Unity, the European Union and the Commonwealth. All of you were there to share our excitement and to witness our liberation.

Since our first fully democratic elections at the end of April a remarkable tranquillity has come to South Africa, and citizens from all walks of life, from all communities, have banded together in a shared effort to make our fledgling democracy the success that they all want it to be. Former political opponents have closed ranks and joined hands because, at heart, they support the new Government's desire to create a better life for all.

Business confidence is growing; the crippling drought appears finally to have broken; and we have the prospect of seeing our economy grow this year by 3 per cent in real terms. The Government believes that the South African economy, with financial discipline and an attitude of cooperation, does have a good future, once the sacrifices we have to make now in terms of our Reconstruction and Development Programme begin to bear fruit. We accordingly welcome, and are encouraged by, the current discussions in various anti-apartheid organizations on transforming themselves into long-term support agencies to promote development in our region. This is the kind of cooperative approach to the problems of development which, I believe, can go a long way towards realizing the objectives which we all share for the people of southern Africa.

Having for decades occupied so much of the time and energy of the General Assembly, South Africa now wishes to say to the world that we want to be a force for good. We look forward to participating fully as a Member of the United Nations, and as we close one chapter in the history both of our nation and of the United Nations, we welcome the prospect of a new one, in which my country and the nations which compose the United Nations work together in the interests of all who share our world.

The President: Before calling on the next speaker, may I appeal to delegations to limit their statements to five minutes so that we may be able to listen to the very great number of representatives who wish to speak today. I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Algeria, Mr. Mohamed-Salah Dembri.

Mr. Dembri (Algeria) *(interpretation from Arabic)*: I should like at the outset to express my deepest condolences to Colombia on the losses caused by the terrible earthquake suffered by that country.

Twenty years ago, in 1974, the international community's condemnation of the South African Government's policy of apartheid was marked in this Hall by a major development, with the decision by the President of the twenty-ninth session of the General Assembly to interpret the rejection of the credentials of the South African delegation as involving the suspension of South Africa's participation in the work of this lofty universal forum. This unprecedented expression of the will of the overwhelming majority of the international community will go down in history as a high point in the United Nations commitment to the people of South Africa in their struggle for the eradication of apartheid and for the establishment of a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa. It will remain for all posterity the symbolic and healthy expression of the universal

conscience, demonstrating that the protection of the human being, in a diversity of races, at all times and places, must guide our search for a redeeming and responsible humanism.

Through the work of individuals and States which thus contributed to placing the General Assembly in the forefront of the struggle against apartheid, the United Nations demonstrated that the emancipation movement of the South African people against racial oppression was born of the truth of just causes. In this way, the Organization reified the purposes and principles of the Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It also allowed the reconciliation of the groups making up the South African people and the welcome for the new South Africa into the African family. Its admission to the comity of nations, which we are celebrating today with the legitimate sense of having fulfilled a duty, is the most striking outcome.

Algeria feels honoured to participate in the welcome extended to the delegation of the Republic of South Africa, led by His Excellency Mr. Alfred Nzo, Minister for Foreign Affairs. We also wish to welcome, in addition to the return of the new South Africa to the General Assembly of the United Nations, the admission of that fraternal and friendly country to the Organization of African Unity and the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, two frameworks for solidarity and action which lent constant and vigorous support to the struggle of the South African people. I wish to assure the delegation of South Africa of Algeria's fullest cooperation in the service of our common causes.

Today, as we mark the end of the mission of the Special Committee against Apartheid, of which Algeria has the honour and privilege to be a member, Algeria congratulates all those States which dedicated themselves to that body, as well as fraternal Nigeria, which provided the Committee with consistent and committed chairmanship in the person of several eminent sons of Nigeria, including Mr. Ibrahim Gambari.

By approving today the credentials of the delegation of the Republic of South Africa and by dissolving the Special Committee against Apartheid, the United Nations is acknowledging the results of a long national liberation struggle and of a pluralist electoral process based on the will of the people of South Africa. Its exemplary importance will be remembered.

By vocation and by choice, at a very early date Algeria resolutely took its place at the side of the South African people and the African National Congress, which mobilized its energies and guided its struggle. President Nelson Mandela and many of his companions were welcomed in training camps of the Algerian National Liberation Army, thus making human friendship the common currency of our two countries, a friendship which has grown stronger over the years. In 1974, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Algeria, Mr. Abdelaziz Bouteflika, as President of the General Assembly, assumed the historic responsibility of pronouncing the political verdict which gave to the people of South Africa as a whole the authority to choose its legitimate representatives. In 1994 it was a former Minister for Foreign Affairs of Algeria, Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi, who, as Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, coordinated the work of the international observers of the electoral process that culminated in the emergence of a united, democratic and non-racial South Africa. The Assembly will therefore understand Algeria's pleasure at participating in this milestone of international life, which arises out of the logic of history.

In addition to its great significance as a major event in the historic journey of the South African people, the African continent and the international community as a whole, the arrival of the new South Africa in the United Nations, as an active partner and an influential voice, is the fulfilment of an expectation. South Africa's wealth of experience, its leaders' sense of responsibility, the genius of its people and the hopes inherent in its potential and capacities all contribute to the dynamic role which this great African country is by nature prepared to assume in order to make further progress towards the realization of the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter.

The movement to achieve decolonization, whose completion globally is expected by the United Nations before the end of this century, should gain from the victory of the South African people renewed legitimacy and new momentum, which will give the fullest expression to the principle of the equality of peoples and their right to self-determination. The United Nations must then actively seek an international order of shared peace and prosperity, with the faith and determination needed to promote humanity's progress on the road to the solidarity that is essential for our future.

The President: I now call on the Honourable Dato'Syed Hamid Albar, Minister in the Prime Minister's Department, Malaysia.

Mr. Dato'Syed Hamid Albar (Malaysia): I am pleased to see you, Sir, preside over these historic meetings.

May I also join you in conveying our deep condolences to the Government and people of Colombia at this time of tragedy.

I also wish to take this opportunity to extend my warmest welcome to His Excellency Mr. Alfred Nzo, the Foreign Minister of South Africa, when, on this historic occasion, the Assembly meets to adopt a resolution to welcome the return of South Africa to the family of nations.

It has taken more than two decades for us to be able to reintegrate South Africa into the international community. This has been made possible by various positive developments within South Africa, including the first democratic and non-racial elections and the subsequent establishment of a united, democratic, non-racial Government on 10 May 1994, under the able leadership of President Nelson Mandela. We, a community of nations, should extend our warmest congratulations on the achievement of the leaders of South Africa and its people in making the peaceful transition a reality. We observe with admiration the role played by President Mandela and Vice-President de Klerk. My delegation welcomes these positive developments and the role played by the two leaders in closing the chapter on apartheid in South Africa.

The elimination of apartheid is a victory for the South African people, who have demonstrated their determination despite severe odds to create a peaceful, non-racial and democratic South Africa. At the same time, the international community, including the United Nations, can take pride and satisfaction in the positive contributions it has made to bringing apartheid to a peaceful end.

Malaysia is proud to have been involved in this process. Consistent with our deep aversion to and abhorrence of, apartheid, we worked actively within and outside the United Nations in the relentless struggle to dismantle apartheid. In fact, Malaysia was one of the first countries to seek the expulsion of South Africa from multilateral organizations for its policy and practice of apartheid. We have consistently taken a principled position against apartheid, which this Assembly deemed a crime against humanity. Malaysia continues to remain firmly opposed to all forms of discrimination.

Earlier in our deliberations today, we adopted a formal decision to terminate the Special Committee against Apartheid, while taking into account its role and achievement in the global effort to eradicate apartheid. The hard work, dedication and achievement of the Special Committee will no doubt occupy a place of honour and importance in the annals of the history of the United Nations - indeed, of the world. It helped galvanize the international community and played an effective role in the global efforts against apartheid. Indeed, we can unanimously acclaim the fact that this Committee has fulfilled its mandate in accordance with the provisions of relevant General Assembly resolutions, in particular, resolution 1761 (XVII) of 6 November 1962 and resolution 2671 (XXV) of 8 December 1970.

It is timely for me at this juncture to extend my delegation's deep appreciation to the Chairman of the Special Committee, His Excellency Mr. Ibrahim Gambari of Nigeria for his leadership and guidance, which enabled the Committee to conclude its work successfully. All those within the Secretariat, as well as outside, who have contributed to the work of this Committee and the struggle against apartheid should also be commended.

While we acknowledge the fundamental changes taking place in South Africa, we should not forget the challenging tasks that lie ahead as the country begins to face a long and arduous process of national reconstruction and development. South Africa will now leave behind its legacies of apartheid and move forward towards the economic well-being of its multi-ethnic, multi-religious and multi-cultural society. In this regard, we share the view expressed by the Special Committee against Apartheid in its report that:

> "The socio-economic disparities caused by apartheid need to be urgently addressed to ensure the stable and peaceful development of post-apartheid South Africa and, in this respect, assistance from the international community will be vital." *(A/48/22/Add.1, para. 204)*

The international community must respond positively to the call by President Mandela during his inaugural ceremony, when he stated:

"We trust you will continue to stand by us as we tackle the challenges of building peace, prosperity, non-sexism, non-racialism and democracy."

At this critical stage in the history of the new South Africa, the international community should spare no effort to be supportive of the Government and people of South Africa. In this regard, I would like to reiterate my Government's firm support for and friendship with the new Government of South Africa. Malaysia always believed that the struggle against apartheid would succeed. We had historical links with the liberation movements in South Africa, helping them within our means. We stand ready to continue to work closely with the Government and people of South Africa in their national endeavour towards the reconstruction and development of their country.

We concur with the conclusions and recommendations of the Special Committee against Apartheid in document A/48/22/Add.1. We support the recommendation that the General Assembly appoint a high-level coordinator for all United Nations development activities in South Africa for the next five years. The proposal to establish an informal group of friends of South Africa in the General Assembly merits serious consideration. Given the changes that have taken place in South Africa, it is important for us to review and define, in close consultation with the South African Government, the future role of the United Nations in that country.

While the continuing support of the international community is undoubtedly vital in the process of reconstruction, we share the view articulated by President Mandela in his inauguration speech that it is timely for all South Africans to heal the wounds and to bridge the chasms. The dawn of a new era requires all South Africans to work together. The close of the chapter of apartheid in South Africa in no way reflects the demise of apartheid in some other parts of the world. The heinous policy and practice of "ethnic" cleansing in Bosnia and Herzegovina remain a blot on the conscience of the international community. We must all reaffirm our deep commitment to the principles and purposes enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and to eradicating apartheid in all its forms.

The President: I should like to inform Members that the remaining speakers scheduled for this morning will be heard first this afternoon. I again appeal for brief statements, because we have a very long list of speakers, and we only have today at our disposal.

I should also like to remind delegates that at its 75th meeting, held on 10 December 1993, the Assembly, by adopting resolution 48/46, decided to amend the title of agenda item 117 by deleting the words "and efforts to eliminate colonialism, apartheid and racial discrimination in southern Africa". The title of the item now reads "Activities of those foreign economic and other interests which impede the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples in Territories under colonial domination".

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.